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LETTER DATED 4 MARCH 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BULGARIA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit, enclosed herewith, a declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria dated 2 March 1993 concerning the blockage by Serbian vessels of the navigation sector of the Danube at the "Iron Gates 2" lock.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and the annex to it circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Slavi PASHOVSKI
Permanent Representative

Annex

Declaration dated 2 March 1993 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria expresses its deep concern at the blockage by Serbian vessels of the navigation sector of the Danube at the Romanian "Iron Gates 2" lock. As a result of these illegal and irresponsible actions, all upstream and downstream traffic on the Danube has stopped completely and vessels belonging to various States have been halted, including a number of Bulgarian catamarans, property of the International Motor Transport Economic Group: Khan Asparoukh, presently at Passau (Germany), loaded; Khan Kroum, presently at Vidin, loaded; Khan Kardam, anchored at the "Jerdap 2" lock, loaded, as well as other ships making forced halts leading to considerable losses by the Bulgarian side.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria considers it inadmissible for the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to take retaliatory measures against States observing the sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council, which, as it is, have already resulted in enormous economic losses for the riparian countries. It subscribes to the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 26 February 1993 calling upon the Serbian authorities to remove the blockage of the navigation on the Danube immediately.

Under the Belgrade Convention of 1948, freedom of commercial navigation on the Danube was instituted and has been in effect for decades now, and it is the obligation of the riparian States not to hinder or impede the navigation on the river midstream. We are witnesses to a gross and unwarranted violation on the part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) of this international obligation and the internationally established regime of free navigation on the Danube.

Particularly disturbing are the recent reports in the press of Serbian threats to blow up the levee at Prahovo with the purpose of changing the river course and diverting the traffic now passing through the canal locks entirely in Romanian territory. Such threats cannot but be considered as environmental terrorism with unpredictable consequences for the countries in the region.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria calls upon the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to remove immediately all obstacles to free navigation at the locks and to abstain from such unfriendly and dangerous actions in the future. At the same time it appeals to the United Nations Security Council, to the Governments of the riparian States and to the States members of the European Community to exert influence on the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) with a view to putting an end to the illegal blockage of the navigation on the Danube.